

Chapter Four

Governmentality and Professionalisation: the New Zealand Association of Counsellors

4.1 Governmentality and the professionalisation of school counselling.

This chapter provides a narrative of being and becoming 'professional'. It examines the double-edged sword of professionalisation, highlighted by a Foucauldian approach: that is professional autonomy versus surveillance and compliance to external agencies in the name of accountability and professional standards. This is amid more recent concerns that have surfaced with neoliberal educational policy agendas of managerialism and accountability resulting in the codification of professional standards for teachers and school counsellors as highlighted in Chapter Two.

In its early history, the establishment of a professional identity for school guidance counselling was largely taken for granted, for the counsellor had to be a teacher of some years standing in order to be selected as a counsellor by the Department of Education. As teachers, counsellors were already considered to be 'professional'. Guidance counsellors have tended to see themselves more as counsellors than as teachers and, in a few schools in the deregulated neoliberal environment, they may not even be trained teachers. If they have been teachers, then they have needed to develop a second professional identity to that of 'teacher' within schools, becoming a 'counsellor'. This section looks briefly at how counselling presents as a 'profession'. In this discussion and analysis, a Foucauldian 'analytics of power' and his notions of ethical self-constitution and self-regulation are used to inform the discussion of professional autonomy.

As counselling changed and developed into a generic profession, guidance counselling became simply a speciality involved in counselling. This was reflected most clearly in the major change in the professional organisation once NZCGA became NZAC in 1990. Instead of being primarily of and for guidance counsellors, after 1990 NZAC became an organisation available for *all* counsellors. In the process, membership mushroomed but school counsellors became a minority and simply one sector for the Association to consider. NZAC, by growing rapidly and representing the wider field of counselling, became far more powerful and also gained a place as a recognised body of some stature. Despite maintaining supportive aspects of NZCGA, NZAC now involves the administration, policing, and surveillance of members to some extent (Winslade, 1997; Manthei, 1997a, 1997b). These changes are described and discussed in section 4.2.

The main body of the chapter focuses on the development of the professional organisation for counsellors (NZCGA which became NZAC), how it was founded, and how it developed "technologies of power" and a form of "governmentality" that exercises a form of power-knowledge that helps to shape and direct the activities of counsellors (Foucault, 1979c, 1982a, 1989). Just as Foucault uses the term "government" to mean more than simply "politics", so he uses "conduct" in the sense of both "being led" or "conducted" and as "behaviour" or "conduct". On Foucault's view, governmentality means the complex of calculations, programs, policies, strategies, reflections and tactics that shape the conduct of individuals, "the conduct of conduct" for acting upon the actions of others in order to achieve certain ends. Those ends are "not just to control, subdue, discipline, normalize, or reform them, but also to make them more intelligent, wise, happy, virtuous, healthy, productive, docile, enterprising, fulfilled, self-esteeming, empowered, or whatever" (Rose, 1998: 12). Governmentality involves control in both its negative sense and its positive sense, in its contribution to the security of society, as an interdependence of the political, governmental and the social that is characteristic of modern Western societies. The governing of others is conducted by a large array of authorities, be they political, economic, military, police, educational, theological, medical, welfare and so on, with the general purpose of avoiding negatives and ills such as crime, mental illness, ignorance and poverty, whilst promoting what is considered desirable by society, that is health, wealth and happiness.

Foucault considers that an explosion of interest in the "art of government" in the 16th century was motivated by four diverse questions: the government of oneself or one's personal conduct; the government of souls and lives or pastoral conduct; the government of children, which subsequently involved pedagogy and their education; and the

government of the state by its prince or ruler (Foucault, 1991). Self-government is connected with morality; governing the family is related to economy and ruling the state to politics. Foucault believes that in the mid 18th century "the family becomes ... the privileged instrument for the government of the population and not the chimerical model of good government" (Foucault, 1991: 100) thus enabling population to become the ultimate end of government. This enabled government to concentrate on the welfare of its population, to embark on large-scale campaigns such as vaccinations, marriage, employment, improving its health, wealth, mortality and it was this context that enabled the "psy" sciences to evolve.

Foucault's notion of governmentality concentrates on understanding the pluralised forms of government, its complexity, and its techniques in the question of *how* power is exercised whereby the rationality of government involves both permitting and requiring the practice of freedom of its subjects. The power relations between government and self-government, public and private domains coincide and coalesce at the point where 'policing' and 'administration' stops and where the freedom of the subject becomes a resource for, rather than a hindrance to, government. In liberal democracies, governing others has always been linked to subjects who are constituted as being 'free' to simultaneously practice liberty and take responsibility for governing the self (Rose, 1998). Analyses in terms of governmentality then involve problematisation, critique, and contestability about these practices of governance of the self and of others.

While the first professional organisation, NZCGA, was set up largely as a support group, NZAC, despite maintaining supportive aspects, could be seen as having become involved to some extent in the administration, policing, and surveillance of members (Winslade, 1997; Manthei, 1997a, 1997b). It could be argued that this role constitutes a form of governmentality at a specific institutional site of power. Some of these issues are aired in a discussion on membership criteria for NZAC in section 4.3. One of the key moves towards increased professionalisation has been a change in membership criteria. Membership of NZCGA in the 1970s and 1980s was vastly different from the detailed criteria that are now required for membership of NZAC. In 1998, the NZAC Membership Committee explored this possibility of maintaining professional standards by setting criteria for a practising certificate that was renewed at regular intervals. But in the light of the huge amount of work that was already involved with the new membership criteria and the need for a supervisor's report for renewal of membership, not to mention some objections from members, the idea of re-assessing members was dropped (see *NZAC Newsletter*, 1998, 18, no.4).

This chapter concludes with a brief overview and critique of the *NZAC School Counsellor Appointments Kit* for Boards of Trustees in section 4.4. The kit describes the possible extent of the job and criteria for the appropriate sort of person to be employed as a counsellor. In the absence of any Ministry of Education job description, this kit provides schools with guidelines for both job and person descriptions, as well as copies of the Association's Code of Ethics, Code of Supervision and guidelines for Training of School Counsellors.

Foucault (1982) commented on the "disciplining" of European society since the 18th century by playing on the double meaning of "discipline". He referred to "blocks" of "disciplines" in which "the adjustment of abilities, the resources of communication, and power relations constitute regulated and concerted systems", citing the example of an educational institution (Foucault, 1982: 218). Foucault (1977) suggested that the operation of institutions such as prisons, factories and schools can be understood in terms of techniques of power that are a form of *power-knowledge* that observe, monitor, shape and control the behaviour of people within these institutions. Disciplinary mechanisms such as "hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and the examination" develop within disciplinary institutions and enable disciplinary power to be achieved by both training and coercing individual and collective bodies (Smart, 1985: 85). He argued that it was not that society had become increasingly obedient, nor that society had set up disciplinary institutions such as barracks, schools or prisons, but rather that an increasingly invigilated process of adjustment had been developed. "More and more, rational and economic relations have been set up between productive activities, resources of communication, and the play of power relations" (Foucault, 1982: 219). Through one of the instruments of the disciplinary technology of power, the examination, and through governmentality, the "psy" sciences emerged in the late 19th and expanded in the 20th century (Foucault, 1989c; Rose, 1989, 1998; Smart, 1985).

The examination observed individuals and, in turn, produced a compilation of written reports, files, and registers that enabled populations to be documented, described, analysed and classified. Through it, each individual and ordinary people became a "case" in a change from "regimes of sovereign power in which only the celebrated and noble were 'individualized' in chronicles and fable ... a lowering of the threshold of description and the construction of a new modality of power" (Smart, 1985: 87). This constituted "the individual as effect and object of power as effect and object of knowledge" (Foucault, 1980: 192). Therefore, the school counselling profession can be understood as involving a form of disciplinary power with its own form of power-knowledge – a set of practices and techniques operating within schools that assist students to "take care of the self" at best, but can impose a form of domination and control at worst.

The Foucauldian notion of power, as formulated in his later work, is not a repressive one, as power is usually conceptualised in traditional liberal sociology and Marxist political thought. While the "juridico-discursive" conception of power is repressive, for Foucault power is not only repressive or negative, but also 'positive', not in the sense of being good or benign or something to aspire to, but in the sense of being constitutive in the shaping of peoples' lives and ideas (Foucault, 1980: 82). Foucault is less concerned with a 'theory' of power than with "an 'analytics' of power: that is, toward a definition of the specific domain formed by relations of power, and toward a determination of the instruments that will make possible this analysis" (Foucault, 1980: 82). Foucault is primarily interested in *how* power is exercised, in "actions upon actions" which constitute power relations (Foucault, 1982: 220) and how it involves creative aspects in relationships, discourses and consciousness. Foucault's later analysis of power shifted to understand power as a form of ethical self-constitution and governmentality. This allows us to understand counselling's recent developments under neoliberalism with its demands for accountability and professionalisation. For Foucault governmentality is not simply about control in its negative sense (such as controlling, subduing, disciplining, normalising or reforming people) but also in its positive, constitutive sense, in its contribution to the security, health, wealth and well-being of society.

The formal governance of school counsellors is conducted by various authorities, such as professional associations to which the counsellor may belong, by legislation, and by employing authorities. The general purpose of formal governance is to avoid negative effects on clients. Informal forms of governance involve feedback from clients, their relatives, peers, friends, and others who associate with them and who judge the counsellors as third parties. Foucault's questions about "how to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor" have implications for the governance of professionals such as school counsellors (Foucault, 1991: 87). Thus, a Foucauldian interpretation of governmentality provides a way of understanding the moves towards increased professionalisation by a professional counselling association like NZAC, as "actions upon the actions" of counsellors and school counsellors.

Counsellors are subject to the rules of their professional organisation and in turn their professional conduct is thereby constituted. Foucault understands the mode of subjectivation as "self-stylization or form-giving" and refers to "the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obligated to put it into practice" (Rabinow, 1997: xxx). Subjectivation applies to both understanding the processes by which clients become subjects, or the making of an autonomous subject, and how counsellors become professionals. It also concerns how individual counsellors establish a relation to the rules, practices and ethical protocols set by the professional organisation that obligates them and acts as a template for practice. Thus the crucial element is a form of *professional self-knowledge*, that not only helps to set the parameters within which the counsellor engages with the client, but also sets in process, the learning processes by which the counsellor, in helping others, constitutes him- or herself as a professional. Significantly, the New Zealand Ministry of Education both recognises and refers to the professional standards set by NZAC (see Chapter Two). In this manner the link between state regulation and professional self-regulation is established; that is, legal constraints are established through the collective employment contract that sets salary levels, conditions of work and performance standards. Thus, what could be considered a fairly integrated and consistent loop has been established with NZAC gaining considerable formal credence as a 'professional' body in the process.

From a Foucauldian viewpoint, the hallmarks of a profession are ethical self-constitution and ethical self-regulation. These twin concepts refer to the traditional Kantian notion of autonomy, especially in relation to professional practice and accountability. Ethical self-regulation is reflected most frequently in codes of professional conduct or codes of ethics by most professions. In addition, it is now customary for the profession to institute a complaints procedure, where charges of professional misconduct or negligence can be heard and dealt with according to established procedures. In the development of school counselling as a profession, a Code of Ethics was established in the first days of the establishment of the New Zealand Counselling and Guidance Association (NZCGA, 1976). A review of this code and the establishment of more clearly defined complaints procedures have occurred since its re-birth as the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC) in the 1990s. The related topic of ethics for counselling is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

What constitutes a profession has remained by no means static over time or place. Occupations considered to be professional vary from one country to another, with some countries applying the term more broadly than others. Some professions have maintained a place (e.g. medicine, law, architecture) others have been added (e.g. dentists, veterinarians, accountants) and some have become de-professionalised and even disappeared (e.g. railroad surgeons, psychological mediums, gynaecological neurology) (Abbott, 1988). By the 18th century, professions such as medicine, law and the clergy, held jurisdiction over health, justice and the soul, respectively. These few professions were expanded to include others that largely reflected the concerns of the relevant age. The Industrial Age added accountants, bankers, engineers whilst the late 19th and 20th century, under the influence of the 'welfare state', witnessed the growth of teaching, academia, scientists, psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, counsellors and social workers. The 'market' economies of the late 20th century have seen the rise of enterprise, marketing, and financial professionals, and all those associated with information technology. Issues of professionalisation hinge on claims for counselling and, by extension, school counselling to be a profession (Feit and Lloyd, 1990). Certainly practitioners involved in the field consider themselves to be professionals and to act professionally, but how does this align with accepted notions of what constitutes a profession? Do counsellors actually attain and not just claim professional status?

Although there is no complete consensus in defining the attributes of a profession, there do seem to be a group of characteristics that distinguishes professions from other occupations (Abbott, 1988; Caplow, 1966; Etzioni, 1969; Vollmer, 1966). In contemporary Western society professionalism requires, first, an appropriate formal tertiary level of education as a minimum standard for entry. This is often in the form of a general undergraduate degree, which is followed by specific professional training, usually at post-graduate level. A major distinguishing characteristic of a profession is the combination of theory and practice, of the attempted integration of 'academic' and 'professional' education into a coherent programme for the profession.

Second, in some instances entry to a profession is restricted by government regulation and/or by a professional organisation. Government regulations and legislation are frequently formulated to ensure that the practitioners of certain professions are both suitably qualified and competent, because their field involves specialised personal services dealing with public health, safety and well being. In addition to external regulation, professions have also been granted traditionally the privilege of self-regulation, based on expectations that members would abide by a set of professional standards of competence and a code of ethics to ensure the protection of the public. The state has often defined training and registration procedures and awarded these professional privileges by acts of parliament, that have in turn determined those who could legitimately call themselves the relevant professional name (e.g. doctor, lawyer, psychologist, nurse, real estate agent, motor vehicle salesperson). It is noteworthy that neither teachers nor counsellors are in this category.

Third, professionalism demands the development of an esoteric body of knowledge, theory and skills over which professionals have a monopoly. In this instance a monopoly does not imply that there are no overlaps nor instances of shared skills, knowledge and expertise, but that there are some aspects that are separate and distinctive in how these are applied or how they operate for a separate profession. Counselling, unlike law, medicine or architecture for example, cannot pretend to have a monopoly over the body of knowledge, theory and skills because it is also

used to a certain extent by psychotherapists, psychologists, social workers and others in the human services who consider that they 'counsel' clients. This chapter limits itself to examining the professionalisation of counselling within its professional organisation and does not attempt any discussion of the well-documented field of the body of knowledge of the profession.

Fourth, there is autonomy and self-regulation by the profession regarding the terms and conditions of practice that may or may not be modified by state or legal regulations. Regulation through certification, licensure and/or registration may be controlled by the state or a professional association. The terms 'certification', 'licensure' and 'credentialising' need some explanation (see <http://www.counseling.org/resources/licensure_legislation.htm> 2001). 'Certification' is the process whereby individuals are granted the use of a title by verifying that they have met certain minimum standards of qualifications specified by professional or government organisations or departments of education. It does not authorise them to practice a profession nor does it regulate the profession. 'Licensure' or 'regulation' is a legislative process of 'credentialising', granting only those persons who hold a license the legal right to practice. Certification sets minimal standards of effectiveness. Once one has passed exams in the requisite knowledge and is granted the appropriate certification to practice, all that can be implied is that the person has passed the minimum criteria for entry to the profession. It may well be that they have superior skills and abilities, but this is not able to be determined through certification. It is then left to an employer or a client to ascertain more about the person's abilities. Employers do this by observation and through referees' reports, whilst clients are usually left with only the option of word-of-mouth from other clients or the recommendation of another professional, such as a referral from a GP to a specialist. Proponents of certification often suggest or assume that the knowledge acquired for achieving certification equates with adequate performance, when this can be demonstrated clearly to be incorrect. Therefore, any effective certification model must include performance standards in its criteria. Just how this is to be done is open to question, since measurement itself poses problems. Knowledge components can usually be assessed via some sort of test, whereas performance components require on the job observations, so trainees should be allowed more than one chance to reach an appropriate level of performance. Counselling trainees need to ascertain their own readiness in applying for certification, by checking against the required criteria and by consulting with their trainers (for debate on certification, see Everts, 1987; Hoyt, 1991; Manthei, 1989). Certification involves a considerable extension of the surveillance of counsellors and of the policing function of professional associations.

Professional groups that have been subject to government regulation have commonly achieved high levels of secure remuneration through being able to control both the supply of its professionals and competition between them (doctors, lawyers, dentists, accountants). The intent to protect the public has resulted in professional self-interest being enabled and endorsed. At times conflict between these two forces has emerged (for example recent criticisms of the Medical Council). In the present era with a far better educated public, traditional structures, regulations and privilege have been challenged. Restraints on competition are believed to lead to a lack of innovation, insufficient information for clients and excessive costs for services, all amidst accusations of professionals promoting their own interests ahead of the public good. Nowadays clients are often less willing to defer to the professional without question and are far more prepared to complain or even seek legal redress when errors are made. As a result, professional indemnity insurance has become a necessity for both professionals and their employers. Neoliberal governments have promoted competition through the reform and limitation of restrictive practices in business, but have had little success in dealing with restrictive professional practices due largely to the power and strength of most professional associations.

Fifth, a professional organisation or association develops to provide a combination of support, advocacy, and disciplinary measures for its members. Such as organisation has a form of collegial authority that devises and upholds a code of ethics and a complaints procedure, that is often largely specific to that profession. It can act to discipline members who breach its codes of ethics and of practice. Representing the profession is a crucial aspect of any professional organisation and important in the process of establishing professional identity. A professional organisation often controls entry to the profession; develops stringent professional membership criteria; formulates a code of professional practice or a code of ethics; has input into the training of prospective members; sets mini-

professional standards; and produces a professional journal and/or newsletter. A professional journal promotes academic exchange and recent research on theory and practice, while a newsletter tends to act as a forum for information, viewpoints and discussion about professional issues. A major distinguishing characteristic of a profession is the combination of theory and practice, of the attempted integration of 'academic' and 'professional' education into a coherent programme for the profession.

Sixth, a profession upholds a commitment to a service ideal. An underlying theme is that the relationship between the professional and the client is based on trust, a sense of moral responsibility, and the ideal of serving the interests of the professional community and society as a whole rather than the self-interests of the individual.

Seventh, a particular orientation to the profession's clients, that often occurs within the framework of a collegial organisation or association, prohibits competition within the profession and withstands challenges from outside, all the while aiming to protect both clients and members. All of these features emphasise the special nature of professional power-knowledge and indicate how the professions can act as disciplinary bodies. In this respect they use dividing practices to exclude those who do not meet their criteria for consideration as 'professional' and disciplinary practices to control those who are considered to be professional. Apart from legislation the other principle means of disciplining professionals is through the rules and activities of governance of professional associations.

Counselling and, by extension, school counselling in the USA, Britain and New Zealand largely fits this description. Counselling in New Zealand has achieved three of the four steps that Caplow (1966) lists: first, forming a professional association; second, changing the Association's name to differentiate it from lower status occupations; and third, promulgating a code of ethics (Miller, 1994). Caplow's fourth step, political lobbying for legislation involving accreditation and credentialing to protect the Association, began with NZAC's ratification in 1991 of a process of accreditation of members but has not (by 2002) been taken further despite discussion about registration. Some debate ensued in the *NZAC Newsletter* about accreditation, with Hans Everts taking a position in favour and Bob Manthei in opposition (Everts, 1987; Manthei, 1989). The first six members to achieve this status did so in 1994, but until 1999 there had been little interest from members, with only a handful taking up this process. With the extensive revamp of the membership process from 1997 onwards, and with outside agencies (e.g. The Accident Compensation Commission [ACC] that funds counselling for sexual abuse survivors) recognising the professional status of NZAC members, the need for accreditation became subsumed under the new membership procedures which themselves constitute a form of accreditation.

Unlike some other professions, in New Zealand counsellors have no legally constituted certification or registration requirements (except for school counsellors who are required to be registered as "specialist teachers") nor protection of the title of "counsellor" (unlike that of psychologist). NZAC does not control entry to the counselling profession. Moreover, since the neoliberal deregulation of school counsellor education, the state no longer defines counsellor training in contrast to the requirements for some occupational groups (e.g. doctors, lawyers, psychologists, nurses, real estate agents and motor vehicle salespersons). The extent of state regulation reflects first, a concern that unless the activities of a selected group of occupations is controlled, the public are likely to be at risk of unacceptable practices; and second, it reflects the way society sees the role of the state. A leftist welfare state tends to strongly value state regulation and control, whereas in contrast, a neoliberal state tends to be more concerned with limiting the power of interest groups and professions through deregulation and decentralised control. Yet in the neoliberal 1980s-1990s, when there was limited regulation of occupations, the New Zealand Education Act (1989) that deals primarily with school administration procedures, set up the Teacher Registration Board. The only aspect of regulation applying to teachers and therefore, to school counsellors was the requirement that Boards employ registered teachers. If the Boards did not fulfil this requirement they could be fined. Why school counselling has not required official registration is probably largely historical. School counsellors were already regulated by the Department of Education and checked by its inspectors. Subsequently ERO audited and evaluated them in a school-wide mandate, and the hierarchy of school administration, HoDs and principals, appraised them. It was only in the late 1990s that professional standards for teachers became a required practice as part of appraisal systems, becoming finally part of the employment contract in 1999 (see Chapter Two).

Up until 2000, political moves to legislate for either the protection of the name 'counsellor', or to require registration or credentialising, have not been a focus for either NZAC or government. NZAC has attempted to create an organisation whose members operate ethically and professionally, where membership really counts for something in terms of professional identity, probity and accountability, and where this is made clear to clients and the general public. This gives NZAC and its members professional credibility against those who call themselves counsellors, but are not members of any professional organisation, because, whilst anyone can call himself or herself a 'counsellor', only counsellors who are NZAC members can identify themselves by using the initials MNZAC (where the 'M' stands for 'member'). While the neoliberal agenda promoted competition and deregulation, there was little likelihood that legal registration for counsellors would be easily enacted. For this to occur there would be probably a need for considerable clamour and lobbying from many public bodies (possibly a moral panic), plus evidence of highly contentious, extremely unethical, unprofessional practice by counsellors, be they NZAC members or not. It would not be sufficient for a professional organisation itself to promote government regulation, for in neoliberal terms, they would likely be dismissed as representing 'self-interest' and provider-capture. What NZAC has focussed on in the political arena has been to ensure that counselling discourse in general, and guidance counselling discourse in particular, is rendered visible (see *NZAC Newsletters*).

It is not mandatory for a counsellor or a school counsellor to belong to a professional counselling organisation like NZAC, but those who do belong have to reach its set of professional standards as set out in the membership criteria (see section 4.3). NZAC's membership requires formal training or an equivalent; upholding the Code of Ethics; and adhering to the ideals of service to clients. Furthermore counsellors are required to be autonomous and to self-regulate the terms and conditions under which they practice within the bounds of their Code of Ethics and their work-place. The complaints procedure and requirements for retaining membership form part of self-regulation and collegial authority. The importance of on-going professional development is clearly recognised by NZAC. By insisting on this requirement, as part of upholding the Code of Ethics, the Association is attempting to deal with beliefs that the competence gap widens in the years after formal training ends. It is sometimes asserted that the useful lifespan of the knowledge components of formal vocational training is about five years. As knowledge shifts, expands, deepens and broadens, and as counselling theories change, with some gaining or losing favour, counsellors need to keep abreast of these and may need to develop new skills. They need a systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge, skills and personal qualities that are not just a blanket openness to the new, but are also a critical evaluation of both new and earlier theories. Experience is important as it enables a counsellor to evaluate knowledge and skills, and to more effectively use both existing and new knowledge. This supports the notion of lifelong education and training as an essential part of counsellor professional identity. As yet NZAC does not spell out the hours required or the types of ongoing professional development that are acceptable, but it does require a statement endorsed by the counsellor's supervisor as a condition for retaining membership. In contrast to what NZAC requires of its members, the PPTA which secondary teachers voluntarily join has only a voluntary code of ethics and there is still no code of ethics to which all teachers must adhere.

4.2 Establishing counselling as a profession: NZCGA becomes NZAC.

The professional body that currently represents the counselling profession, the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC), grew out of an organisation set up by and for school guidance counsellors, known as the New Zealand Counselling and Guidance Association (NZCGA). Hermansson (1999) and Wadsworth (1999) detail the antecedents to this organisation in the form of informal groups in the main centres, the Auckland School Counsellors Association (1967-1974) and a National Association of School Counsellors, initiated by Bernie Flowers in 1970. Ted Wadsworth (NZCGA initial, interim President) was a prime mover in both the Auckland and National Associations, and was heavily involved in promoting the cause of guidance counsellors at national level.¹ Through the *Newsletter* he invited all 108 guidance counsellors, convening the inaugural meeting and conference that aimed "to establish a National Association of Guidance (or Student) Counsellors" (Hermansson, 1999:14). This coincided with the setting up of New Zealand's second university-based counselling course at Massey University and resulted in the inauguration of NZCGA on 1 September 1974, at a conference of about fifty-six people, forty of whom were school guidance counsellors. "Careers advisors, guidance teachers, vocational guidance officers, psychologists, social workers and counsellor educators" also attended (Miller, 1996: 37). The conference

presentations (see NZCGA, 1974) included: "Is there a time for being professional?" (Ted Wadsworth); "The counsellor's role in a changing system of education" (Peter Boag); "Towards a responsible humanism: counselling in the post-Rogerian era" (Dr Alan Webster); "The community helps itself" (Felix Donnelly); and "Ancillary and supporting services in guidance" (John Pankhurst). Whilst the gathering was to examine and share counselling issues, experiences and resources of those already working in this area (Hermansson, 1999; Miller, 1996), the aim of NZCGA was "to promote within the New Zealand community effective counselling and guidance services" (Hermansson, 1999: 18). Such an emphasis on effectiveness is significant both then and now for the professionalisation of the Association.

The 1977 Objects of NZCGA reflected its place as a new Association and profession centred in schools. Apparent from these objectives is the important role of effectiveness, professional standards, training and supervision.

Objects of NZCGA (1977 Constitution)

- a) to promote effective counselling and guidance services in educational institutions and related services;
- b) to assist clients to obtain services adequate to their needs;
- c) to develop common policies on counselling and guidance issues and to transmit these to the public, to the Government, and to other appropriate authorities;
- d) to ensure the establishment of professional standards, to promote satisfactory conditions of employment and to protect the interests and public standards of counselling and guidance personnel;
- e) to provide a forum for members to discuss matters of common concern;
- f) to promote an adequate level of training and supervision;
- g) to publish such journals, monographs and other publications as the National Executive shall from time to time decide;
- h) to affiliate with national and international organisations of counselling and guidance.

(NZCGA Constitution 1977, cited in Hermansson, 1999: 34).

Apart from extending the focus to encompass counselling beyond the educational setting, removing references to "guidance" and adding the last clause related to equity and social justice, the present-day NZAC displays a clear link to the past and does all that the original constitution describes:

Objects of NZAC (1995 Constitution)

- a) to promote effective counselling services;
- b) to assist clients to obtain services adequate to their needs;
- c) to develop common policies on counselling and guidance issues and to transmit comment on these issues to the public, to the Government, and to other appropriate authorities;
- d) to ensure the establishment of professional standards, to promote satisfactory conditions of employment and to protect the interests and public standards of counselling and guidance personnel;
- e) to provide a forum for members to discuss matters of common concern;
- f) to promote an adequate level of training and supervision;
- g) to publish such journals, monographs and other publications as the National Executive shall from time to time decide;
- h) to affiliate with national and international organisations of counselling;
- i) to express through its activities and resource allocations a strong commitment to reduce social disadvantages resulting from differences of race, gender, class, religion, sexual orientation and any contravention of Human Rights

(NZAC Handbook, n.d., circa 1995).

Despite the emphasis on school guidance counselling, some participants at the initial 1974 NZCGA conference, particularly the university counsellor educators, saw the need for the main emphasis to be on the term 'counselling' rather than the specific educational connotations of 'guidance'. Prior to the advent of the in-school service of

guidance counselling, guidance comprised extramural specialist support services for school students, centred on health, welfare, employment and special education (e.g. school medical officers, district nurses, school dental nurses, visiting teachers, welfare officers, social workers, vocational guidance counsellors, educational psychologists). Within schools guidance embraced notions of pastoral care, with teachers getting to know students as individuals and being aware of educational, social, and personal difficulties they may be having (Winterbourn, 1974; Small, 1981). There was also an intention, foreshadowing the 1990 changes, to appeal to a wider membership than just school guidance counsellors. Hence the Association's order of names, with "counselling" preceding "guidance" so that counselling was emphasised in the context of guidance rather than the reverse, which is the more traditional order (Hermansson, 1999). The job title of "guidance counsellor" is an indication of the fairly directive nature of the job in the early years. In line with current NZAC nomenclature, some schools now have replaced the title with "school counsellor", especially where other personnel have taken on the aspects of guidance and careers advice in large urban schools.

NZCGA communicated with and supported members via meetings, conferences, workshops, newsletters and a professional journal, the *NZCGA Journal* that was re-named the *New Zealand Journal of Counselling* at the 1991 AGM, subsequent to the change to NZAC in 1990. The Association's Newsletter has been a prime source of communication, information and debate between National Executive and members. Manthei (1991) contended that this mirrored current concerns and changes in the profession and were explored in Miller's (1996) research. As part of the professionalisation process, the *Newsletter* has been used to explain and legitimate the identity of the Association. NZCGA successfully claimed recognition from the Department of Education as *the* representative organisation of guidance and counselling personnel, demanding representation at forums discussing the future of guidance and counselling (NZCGA Newsletter, 1980) and in time, NZAC gained similar recognition. In this capacity, NZCGA commented on selection and standards of training for school and vocational guidance counsellors, providing guidelines of broad principles rather than definitive policies for approved training courses. This situation remained until the setting up of NZAC's Training Approval Group in 1997 (see next section). NZCGA lobbied PPTA and Government, e.g. the 1987 president, Murray Woodfield considered that NZCGA was partly responsible for the 'tagged' PR2 position for school guidance counsellors within the school staffing formula (Miller, 1996: 40). According to Miller (1996), the Association's role of support established jurisdiction over guidance counsellors and was extended subsequently to counsellors in other contexts.

In an *NZCGA Newsletter* in 1989, Hermansson argued the case for NZCGA becoming an organisation for counsellors in various contexts because including those outside the education sector would reflect the burgeoning number of counsellors in New Zealand. In the process, he recommended that "a name change to one that concentrates on counselling will be the basis for meeting these needs" (Hermansson, 1989: 15). There was no obvious dissent, but the opportunity for widespread consultation did not really occur. Apart from indications of intent in the 1989 *Newsletter* and Hermansson's article in Small and Ambrose's 1989 book, this change occurred particularly quickly the next year. After considerable discussion at the 1990 AGM, the motion to change the Association's name whilst removing "guidance" from both the objectives and criteria for membership was carried (Hermansson 1999).

The name change, in de-emphasising "guidance" as a term more specifically related to schools, and the term "counselling" as a more generic term, enabled the Association the chance to expand to potentially encompass all counsellors. The New Zealand Counselling and Guidance Association (NZCGA) became the New Zealand Association of Counsellors (NZAC), reflecting the broader organisation that it was to rapidly become (NZAC Newsletter, 1990). This move also reflected the strong influence and leadership that university counsellor educators, especially Gary Hermansson and Bob Manthei, had at most AGMs, where they frequently proposed motions. They often seemed to be aware of the implications for the future of various issues, which should not be surprising considering their place in universities and an expectation that they would be cognisant of the political climate and policy implications. Counsellor educators must also have been aware of policy implications on their livelihoods if school counselling was only ever likely to have finite numbers, whereas educating counsellors from other contexts could provide a large potential market for counsellor education.

Few realised quite how momentous the change would be, certainly not in terms of the exponential increase in membership numbers and problems in terms of the range of training that many prospective members were claiming as adequate for membership. Many seemed to have accumulated their training in a very ad hoc manner, such as cobbling together bits of training from workshops and brief courses. Hence, serious concerns arose about professional standards and criteria for membership, resulting in considerable changes in the late 1990s (as detailed in the next section). Aspects of the constitutive elements of NZAC exhibit long-held concerns about counsellor effectiveness and accountability, and demarcation issues. Through these particular aspects counselling attempts to establish itself as a profession in its own right, distinct from psychologists, social workers and others in the helping area (Webb, 1998).

The late 1990s witnessed an increase in membership numbers from diverse sectors of counselling. Alongside this came increased concern about issues of professionalism, client safety, credentialising and accountability within NZAC, which impacted on the accountability and effectiveness of school counselling. Much of this was driven by the needs of increasing numbers of members in private practice who, unlike the salaried school counsellors, obtained a proportion of their income from ACC (Accident Compensation Commission) who funded personal injury or sexual abuse counselling (Miller, 1996). ACC funded counselling was first available in 1988 and regulations were subsequently tightened to require ACC funded counsellors to be registered with an ACC Counsellors' Approval Committee. Approval criteria for ACC included belonging to a recognised professional Association. Thus many counsellors who did not belong to such a body joined NZAC (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1992). This, in turn, pushed the Association to focus on a discourse of increased professionalisation, credibility, accountability, and quality control in updating the Code of Ethics, and exercising increasingly stringent membership criteria, especially from 1997. ACC therefore had a major impact on the Association.

NZAC has consistently shown its concerns with professional standards and accountability for all counsellors through developing a wide range of systems and policies. These include, first, a Code of Ethics. Second, if the Code of Ethics is breached it may result in the member being subject to a complaints procedure that is monitored by an Ethics Committee and may result in the member being disciplined. Third, a Code of Supervision requires regular, fortnightly supervision for full-time counsellors. Fourth, strict membership criteria, administered by a Membership Committee, have applied since 1997. Apart from special circumstances, members must have been trained in theory, skills and practice at approved tertiary level courses. Only members can use the initials MNZAC. Fifth, a Training Approval Working Group has been established to ascertain which of the plethora of training courses reach standards that are acceptable for NZAC membership. Sixth, there is the recognition of supervisors who are acceptable to NZAC. Seventh, an Accreditation Committee monitors accreditation criteria for members who display advanced counselling skills, and are signified by the initials AMNZAC. Eighth, for continued acceptance of membership, existing members are required to provide an annual supervisor's report outlining the amount and type of supervision and professional development undertaken, both of which are ethical requirements. Ninth, there is policy on the role of school counsellors in relation to the national education and administration goals and guidelines and an appointments kit for schools, which includes a sample job description, person specification, training requirements, and supervision (see section 4.4).

Despite these changes they form a kind of 'filling in the gaps' exercise in terms of systems, because the Objects of the Association (as listed earlier) have changed very little since at least 1988, with effective service to clients holding pride of place (Webb, 1998). NZAC does have a part to play in encouraging appropriate working conditions for counsellors, but not in a union-type sense with negotiation and bargaining. It certainly lobbies the Ministry of Education, PPTA, agencies, and ACC on behalf of counsellors so that they have conditions that are as conducive as possible to act ethically, safely and professionally. School counsellor members of NZAC must fulfil the same criteria as non-school counsellors to become and remain members. Like any other member, school counsellors are able to become 'recognised supervisors' after fulfilling criteria that include specific training and experience as supervisors. They can similarly become accredited members of NZAC after belonging to the Association for two years, counselling for at least five years and providing further evidence of competence in their practising skills. The numbers of school counsellors reached around 400 in 1990. By 1995 overall membership totalled 1544, with 400 (25%) as

school counsellors, 530 (30%) in private practice (NZAC Annual Report, 1994-1995). By late 1996 there were approximately 1800, and by 2000 there are over 2000 members, but the number of school counsellors remained much the same, around 400 (figures from NZAC Executive Officer, James Shepherd). Instead of the professional Association being largely for school counsellors, this group was now in the minority. To date, despite this they still play a major role as officers at branch and at national level and have support groups in several branches. To ensure representation, there is a specific school counselling portfolio amongst other portfolios on the National Executive.

4.3 Setting professional criteria: becoming a member of NZCGA & NZAC.

The process for becoming a member of NZCGA, and now of NZAC, is discussed at some length in this section. Setting the criteria for membership of a professional organisation is a key component of the establishment of professional identity. Important changes have occurred in tandem with increased demands for professionalisation in the new counselling organisation. As a result, some tensions have been expressed about the power relations between the National Executive and members, with something of an 'us and them' attitude being displayed at times at the 1999 AGM. These tensions have been aired in George Sweet's "Mad Hatter" column in the *NZAC Newsletter*. Like many organisations, as the NZAC becomes larger and more professionalised, it risks becoming more bureaucratic, with some members perceiving a distance between themselves and those holding power as office-holders of the Association. This section discusses some of the committees and working groups of the Association and the processes that have dealt with membership. Criticism of the changes is also included, oriented and informed by Foucauldian notions. What is not spelled out in these criticisms is just how powerful NZAC has become and how bound up this is with a form of governmentality that uses its power-knowledge in a system of surveillance of members.

Requirements for membership of NZAC have changed along with changes in the Association. Yet some similarities and hence some continuity remains when comparing the criteria of 1977 and 1998. The membership criteria that were formalised as part of the initial 1977 Constitution were as follows:

- a) persons who are, to the satisfaction of the National Executive Committee, engaged for 12 hours or more per week in the area of counselling and/or guidance in an educational institution or related service;
- b) persons who are engaged in or who have satisfactorily completed a course of full-time professional training in the area of counselling and guidance;
- c) persons who are invited to become members by resolution of the National Executive Committee. (*NZCGA Constitution 1977, cited in Hermansson, 1999: 34-35*).

In the NZCGA era, the only formal counselling training was at post-graduate university level and then only for trained teachers appointed as guidance counsellors or vocational guidance counsellors. Once the Association became NZAC, with membership open and available to counsellors from outside the education sector, the type of training was no longer a given. Counsellors who were in private practice or in agencies other than education may or may not have received training from various sources, and may or may not have built up a high level of skills over many years in practice. The difficulties that the membership committee faced in sorting and ascertaining the content of training, theory, and bi-cultural awareness raised many concerns in the flood of applications in the mid 1990s. It was from these concerns and other criticisms that more stringent criteria for membership (outlined later in this section) came into existence.

The late 1990s saw changes in criteria for both new and on-going membership of NZAC. Such changes were prompted from concern expressed in many quarters, about accountability, the quality and effectiveness of counselling, client safety, the quality of the vastly increased number of counselling training providers, and about increasing and setting clear ethical standards for NZAC membership in the increasingly de-regulated and competitive, neoliberal environment. In her annual report after four years as Convenor of the Ethics Committee fielding client's complaints, Janet Irwin (1997) voiced her concern at the quality of counselling by some members and non-members. The professional integrity of counselling was under question and immediate action was required to strengthen the Association through changes in membership criteria, and the emphasis on competent and effective supervision.

Considering that counselling occurs in a private setting where a relationship with the client is central to the work undertaken, Webb (1998:13) argues that "counselling can only ever be safe in the hands of a self-regulating autonomous professional."

A Membership Approval Committee, based in Auckland, was set up to deal with the huge increase in membership applications and the complexity of their assessment, and to provide consistency and continuity. The eight members were Jim Halliday (a National Executive member as convenor), Dorothy McCarrison, Tina Besley, Tania Cargo, Carole Carr-Vickers, Jenny Goddard, Stefan Hunt, Peter McMillan. The Membership Committee began informally in 1995 to assist the National Executive member responsible for membership, but was ratified at the 1997 AGM. Their role was to assess applications for membership and make policy recommendations to National Executive. In the September 1996 *Newsletter*, President Carol Mawhinney (later White), clarified changes to membership following the 1996 AGM (*NZAC Newsletter*, 17, (1): 6). Prior to the July 1996 AGM, people who for some reason did not meet the criteria to be a Member were called Applicant members. After July 1996, Applicant members were required to fulfil membership within a reasonable time or their application would cease. Individuals and groups, which had previously been entitled to be 'affiliated', would cease on January 31, 1997, so that those "who did not meet all the criteria for Member status will be categorised as either an Applicant or a Subscriber" (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1996, 17, (1): 6). To further complicate the situation, a *stop press* notice appeared in the *Newsletter* putting a hold on all applications for membership and upgrade until new criteria for membership were set (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1996, 17, (1)). Letters were sent to people affected by the moratorium who were still able to become subscribers (different categories of membership are described later in this section). Needless to say there were some disgruntled membership candidates.

As a number of members had expressed concern about the current process for approving and retaining membership, and about ongoing supervision of existing members, three initiatives were set up:

- (1) *A process for retaining membership* - a supervisor's report form outlining professional development and supervision details, signed by the supervisor was to be completed on payment of annual membership subscription (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1997, 18 (1): 40). This did not become mandatory until 1998.
- (2) *The formation of a Membership Working Party* after the 1996 AGM (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1996, 17 (1): 6). The Membership Working Party (1996): comprised Dorothy McCarrison (Convenor), Jim Halliday (National Executive), Peter McMillan and Carole Carr-Vickers (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1996, 17 (2): 3). Its recommendations were built "on the assumption that all members want to be recognised as safe and competent practitioners and that membership of our Association indicates acceptable standards of safety and competence" (Halliday, 1997: 26).
- (3) *The Training Approval Working Group* 1997 (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1997, 18, 4). Training Approval Working Group, set up in late 1997 comprised members from Auckland and Dunedin: Carol White as Convenor, and Janet Irwin, Julie Thomas, Liz Price, Maureen Bretherton, and Ada Crowe (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1998, 18, 4). It was set up to spread the representation and assist the overburdened Membership Committee; to communicate and negotiate between training providers and the Committee; and to provide accurate information to counsellor trainees about the status of training programmes with NZAC. It is important to note that there is no formal connection between NZQA course approval and NZAC approval nor any record of discussions with NZQA about training course approval. NZAC does however, have representation on the Industry Training Organisation (ITO), Te Kaiawhina Ahumahi for developing unit standards in counselling (the representative was formerly Jean Mardell, and more recently, Frances Griffiths). Although the negotiation for NZQA course approval to be in line with NZAC requirements may well have saved the Association a lot of time and effort, it seems that the reluctance to take this direction was largely to do with issues of autonomy. NZAC was keen to maintain its professional autonomy. Universities held a negative position towards NZQA at the time, so NZAC may have been influenced by the university educators in this matter. Therefore the NZAC developed a process that set standards for counsellor training programmes/courses to be granted the status of "an approved training programme" once they were assessed against the training requirements for membership of NZAC (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1999, 19, 4).

Following the Membership Working Party recommendations, National Executive set out a five point rationale as the basis for new membership policies:

- 1) Membership criteria reflect NZAC's belief that counselling competence is founded on the integration of theory and safe practice.
- 2) As an organisation NZAC believes that this is best achieved by completing a coherent and comprehensive counselling training programme.
- 3) NZAC recognises that until recently such training has not been accessible to all.
- 4) NZAC believes that continued membership is dependent on the maintenance of professional standards.
- 5) NZAC acknowledges responsibility for the development and promotion of processes to achieve these objects.

(*NZAC Newsletter*, 1996, 17 (2): 7).

Remits for the changes in membership criteria were presented, debated and passed at the Queenstown AGM 1997. In an article spelling out and commenting on these changes, National Executive member, Jim Halliday outlined the new criteria, pointing out that:

These new standards should help to raise the profile of counselling, and of the Association, and consequently give more power to the Association when it moves to act on the concerns of individual Members or special interest groups (Halliday, 1997: 26).

Halliday (1997) reminded members that to retain membership, counsellors in full-time work were expected to have fortnightly supervision (half of which should be individual supervision) with a supervisor belonging to an appropriate professional organisation. No definition of an appropriate organisation was provided, but it was expected to be an organisation with a Code of Ethics, a complaints procedure and professional supervision closely related to those of counselling. Such an organisation, as exemplified on the report form, might be: NZAC, NZ Association of Psychotherapists (NZAP), NZ Association of Social Workers (NZASW), and NZ Psychological Society (NZPsychS). The supervisor's report provides evidence that the member is in regular supervision and undertaking ongoing professional development, which are requirements of the Code of Ethics, and the means of maintaining professional standards as part of being professionally accountable to clients, colleagues and the public. This was endorsed in subsequent newsletters: "From 1998, all members will be required to submit a current supervisor's report before membership will be renewed" (*NZAC Newsletter*, 1997, 18 (1): 39).

Manthei (1997b) commented that what was really required was a re-titled, "Member's Supervision Report" form signed by the supervisor, verifying that the member has fulfilled their obligations under the Code of Ethics with regard to supervision and professional development. He suggested that in due course NZAC should provide guidelines for activities and the hours required for the professional development component. Furthermore, he and Enid Hardie (1997), reinforced the notion that while the Complaints Procedure deals with serious issues of client safety, "the onus should be on Members, not NZAC or their supervisors, to ensure they are meeting the requirements of the Codes of Ethics and Supervision" (Manthei, 1997b: 12); and he noted that:

Questions about the quality (or standard) of actual practice remain, but there is no easy, effective or affordable way of policing or ensuring that NZAC will ever be able to check up on every member each year to ensure that each is practising up to some mythical standard of safety or that 'professional standards are maintained.' It will go broke trying to do so (Manthei, 1997b: 12).

Halliday (1998) reassured members about the forms, such as who saw them and what was done with them. They were stored with the Executive Officer, retained for a year and only viewed by the Membership Committee or National Executive if there was some controversy. The Membership Committee intended to respond to returns that questioned or criticised the process. He indicated that although there was no definite decision, in future the information might be added to a Member's file.

The 1997 membership criteria were amended at the 1998 AGM with changes and clarification to the "particular circumstances", which allows for membership for people with informal instead of formal training. This is a largely

interim provision to permit membership for people living at a distance from training centres, but especially for older, experienced counsellors who have been in practice prior to the setting up of the plethora of training courses that now exist. So by 1999 there were criteria for becoming a member, or an applicant or a subscriber, with the last two being non-member categories.

NZAC Membership Criteria, 1999 *Member*: The following shall be eligible for membership

(1) *Through approved training*: a person who

- has completed a cohesive and comprehensive counselling training through a course approved by the Association, and
- has a record of bi-cultural learning and/or experience, including marae experience, has sensitivity to treaty of Waitangi issues, and can demonstrate an understanding of Tikanga Māori, and
- has completed a self-awareness and personal growth component including counsellor as client and group therapeutic process, and
- has completed face to face practice as a counsellor (400 hours), and
- has submitted a recent satisfactory report from a supervisor acceptable to NZAC who has been the candidate's supervisor for at least 6 months, and
- has had their suitability for membership confirmed in an interview by a panel of Members on behalf of the Membership committee.

Notes: An approved training programme is of a minimum one-year full time equivalence and integrates relevant cultural and social awareness and sensitivity; theoretical knowledge; skills training; personal awareness; professional practice; and practice supervision components. Of the 400 hours of counselling practice, a minimum of 100 hours is to be completed and supervised during training and a minimum of 200 hours post-training. The post-training face-to-face counselling is to have been supervised for at least 20 (1 hour) sessions with a supervisor acceptable to NZAC.

(2) *Through particular circumstances*. A person who:

- is granted membership based on the person's particular circumstances and presents with the qualities, knowledge, skills and experience of a candidate who qualifies under (1), and
- has a record of bi-cultural learning and/or experience, including marae experience, has sensitivity to Treaty of Waitangi issues, and can demonstrate an understanding of Tikanga Māori, and
- has completed a self-awareness and personal growth component including counsellor as a client and group therapeutic process, and
- has a record of satisfactory face to face practice as a counsellor (400 hours), and
- has submitted a recent satisfactory report from a supervisor acceptable to NZAC who has been the candidate's supervisor for at least 6 months, and
- has had their suitability for membership confirmed in an interview by a panel of Members on behalf of the Membership committee.

Notes: This option is a vehicle for recognising personal development, learning and experience from a variety of sources, including extensive supervised counselling practice, which the candidate has been able to integrate to form their own professional foundation for counselling work. The onus is on the candidate to demonstrate that they have acquired in other ways, the awareness, theoretical knowledge skills and experience normally found in an approved training programme, achieved appropriate levels of competency and integrated different sources of learning. Detailed information and evidence must be provided.

(3) *Through special invitation*. A person who

- is invited to become a member by resolution of the National Executive.

Non-Member Categories

1. Applicants - are persons who are working towards Membership, are bound by the NZAC Code of Ethics and are accountable to the Association. Applicant status may be granted to persons who have completed or are enrolled in an NZAC approved training programme. Applicant status may be granted at a specific stage in each training programme. The stage is decided for each training programme through consultation between NZAC and the training provider. Applicant status may be held without review for three years. The three year period for those who

were applicants at the period of the 1997 AGM will date from that meeting. At the end of the three year period an Applicant will be required to report on progress towards Membership and to indicate a likely time frame for any remaining programme.

2. Subscribers - are persons or groups who have an interest and/or involvement in counselling activities. Their subscription entitles them to receive all publications of the Association (Hermansson, 1999: 156-158).

Part of the changed criteria involved an interview at the final stage for the membership candidate, at the discretion of the Membership Committee. This comprised a panel of four people: two from the Membership Committee and two from the region where the panel was sitting. To enable the latter to occur, nominations were called in June 1997 from well-established members (NZAC Newsletter, 1997, 18 (1)). To reduce costs, in 1999 the composition of the panel changed to include one person from the Membership Committee, two or three local representatives, with priority given to one Maori representative. Another change was the provision for Members to take temporary leave from active membership of NZAC at the discretion of the Membership Committee. This was required in the environment that saw supervisors' reports being a requirement to accompany subscriptions to maintain on-going membership.

These changes were not without their critics (Manthei, 1997a, 1997b; Sweet, 1997; Winslade, 1997) as correspondence in letters to the NZAC Newsletter Editor attests. Manthei (1997a, 1997b) was concerned that NZAC's role should not be one of policing, but that instead, members should be made aware of required standards and take responsibility for their own ethically competent practice. He was concerned that at a burgeoning cost financially, NZAC was increasingly controlling not only who qualifies for membership but also how members practice counselling, essentially in order for NZAC members to be accepted by outside agencies (e.g. ACC, Family Court) as competent and therefore eligible for third-party funding to work with clients. This was resulting in the Association becoming an "increasingly exclusionary, guild-oriented organisation" (Manthei, 1997a: 44) through more stringent and restrictive requirements for training, membership and supervision.

Manthei (1997a, 1997b) posed serious questions about the role of NZAC as an organisation, its aims, philosophy, beliefs, form and structure asking, "what it is and whom it represents" (Manthei, 1997b: 12). He problematised the issue, asking if this was about setting standards or a form of surveillance or policing of members, pondering the difference between these. He criticised the changes as being piecemeal, passed by only 1% of the membership, being done without "questioning the practicality or desirability of continuing to assume that it is NZAC's job to police individual members' behaviour and professional practices" (Manthei, 1997a: 44). But the changes were overwhelmingly supported and passed at the 1997 AGM despite criticism that the actual numbers who were voting reflected an extremely low proportion of the membership, and that it was undemocratic (Manthei, 1997a; Sweet, 1997). These commentators have not acknowledged that the proposals were sent as remits to all members, that several branches had consultation meetings about this issue and that members who could not attend were able to vote by proxy. Such are the issues of democracy. Had the changes been total anathema to the membership, not only could proxy votes have defeated the proposed changes, but they could have also been overturned at subsequent AGMs.

Contrary to Manthei's opinion, the changes were by no means piecemeal. They were in fact quite sweeping. From the time of their initial proposal and adoption at the 1997 AGM (Halliday, 1997), they have not been substantially altered to date (post 1999 AGM), apart from tightening up the wording and providing more detail to bring the "particular circumstances" pathway into line with membership "through approved training", and the 200 hours of supervised counselling post-training. Relatively minor amendments at subsequent AGMs dealt with allowing applicants, who were caught by the moratorium, to proceed under the criteria that applied at the time of their application. Also a new more detailed Appendix to the Constitution regarding membership criteria was written. This would appear to indicate that despite criticism, most members supported the changes.

John Winslade (1997) expressed similar reservations about increased policing and surveillance of existing and new members, questioning whether or not the new criteria were the best ways to improve professional standards. He posed some important questions about the sources of perceived threats to these standards asking if they came from:

the increased membership; inadequate training programmes; territory issues with competing professions challenging the existing standards of counselling practice as a means to justify excluding counsellors; concern about the practice of some counselling colleagues; clients receiving poor service from NZAC members; defending counselling practice against powerful critics; or in response to NZQA requirements? In doing so, Winslade assumed that the moves for changes to membership criteria were simply reactionary on the part of the Association, rather than pro-active measures. It would seem though, despite a lack of particular documentation, that the changes resulted from reactions to all of those questions and from the Association deciding to take action to deal with them, before any criticisms became too damaging for the Association.

He criticised the "evaluative gaze" (Winslade, 1997: 17), which focused on individuals rather than on training programmes, as undermining and creating anxiety, believing that "overall, processes that focus on the individuals serve to lower professional standards (by generally undermining professional confidence) rather than to raise them" (Winslade, 1997: 16). But he provided no evidence or references to support this Foucauldian viewpoint. Further, he expressed serious concern about the nature of supervision, if the supervisor is called on to provide an evaluation report to employing organisations (e.g. ACC, schools) as a means of appraisal and accountability, and he suggested that asking clients would be a better and more appropriate check on accountability. To maintain the notion of supervision as supportive, open, trusting, and non-evaluative, he noted that many counsellors have already separated out clinical supervision from line management supervision within their employing agencies. He asserted that it would be preferable to create an affirming climate through the quality of experiences and programmes. Sweet (1997) assumed that counsellors are generally on the political Left, so found it strange that they would embrace the sort of training and membership criteria that he perceived to be an adoption of right-wing, NZQA/Business Round Table economic mode and values. From a neoliberal, managerialist perspective, on the one hand, it could be argued that the membership and supervision monitoring, as a new condition for belonging to NZAC, is about accountability. Yet on the other hand, from a Foucauldian perspective, such conditions would be considered an example of policing or turning the gaze back onto its own profession, as the operation of a form of governmentality.

4.4 Describing school counselling: the NZAC school counsellor appointments kit.

NZAC has devised a *School Counsellor Appointment Kit*² (NZAC, 1995, 2nd edition) to assist Boards of Trustees in appointing appropriately qualified school counsellors who will perform to an acceptable professional and ethical standard. The kit is sent to all schools that advertise guidance counsellor positions and NZAC offers to provide an experienced member to act as a consultant in the selection and appointment process. While this displays NZAC's concern about professional standards, it could also be interpreted as NZAC's self-interest and as an attempt to influence BoT appointment decisions. However, in the absence of any Ministry of Education guidelines or job descriptions for the appointment of counsellors, in what could be criticised as an abrogation of their responsibilities. NZAC have made a genuine attempt to fill the gap since the 1990s.

The NZAC appointment kit comprises: an application form; a sample job description; a sample person specification; fourteen possible interview questions; an NZAC counselling brochure; and three appendices from the NZAC Handbook: the Code of Ethics, Code of Supervision, and Guidelines for the Training of Counsellors. Apart from the usual sorts of personal information and statements in job applications, the school counsellor application form indicates only something of the professional counselling standards. Both academic and professional qualifications including training details are sought. Work experience includes relevant full-time, part-time and voluntary work in counselling. Details of membership of counselling-related professional associations are asked for, as are counselling supervision arrangements.

More detail about professional standards of what is or can be expected lies in the sample job description that lists six primary objectives and seven key tasks. The primary objectives are:

- 1) To work with Senior Administration staff, Guidance Network and Form/Whanau teachers to develop the present pastoral care system to meet the needs of both the pupils and the school.
- 2) To offer counselling opportunities to students, staff and the students' parents/caregivers if necessary.

- 3) To act as a resource person for staff, students and their parents/caregivers.
 - 4) To assist with staff training and development.
 - 5) To liaise with contributing schools, training providers and relevant outside agencies.
 - 6) To act as an agent for positive change within the school community.
- (*School Counsellor Appointment Kit*, NZAC, 1995, 2nd edition: 4).

From this list, it is clear that pastoral care and counselling are of prime importance, but exactly what items 3, 4 and 5 are referring to is vague and do not spell out that they could or should be related to counselling and guidance. Item 6 would seem to be laudable, but is completely open to interpretation and judgement calls on the part of the counsellor. As a result, it is argued that the list is in need of revision in order to be more specific about the primary objectives for a guidance counsellor.

The seven key tasks in the sample job description are: counselling, programme work, vocational guidance and counselling; transition education; administration; liaison; and professional development. These provide more detail. The list has been criticised subsequently as being somewhat dated (voiced at NZAC workshops and consultation meetings held in Auckland in 1997 to re-develop a policy statement about the role of school counsellors in relation to the NEG and NAGs).³ In the light of their deletion from current counsellor education courses, it is somewhat surprising that vocational guidance and counselling, transition education and possible involvement in administering standardised testing are still included (see previous chapter). Counsellors in small schools may well be involved in these areas, but in larger schools there is likely to be more of a division of labour, with these tasks being assigned as separate jobs for different people.

Considering NZAC's concern for ethical behaviour and professional standards, it is alarming that the job description and primary objectives refer at no stage to confidentiality or to supporting a Code of Ethics, although ethical behaviour as per the NZAC Code is implied in the section on professional development. This refers to maintaining regular, preferably fortnightly supervision and relevant professional development. In fact there is little specific detail on the *how* of counselling, or about belonging to a professional association and nothing about dealing with complaints of any sort. Whilst this is only a *sample* job description, counsellors in different schools are expected to devise their own job description, emphasising what they actually do, rather than some sort of broad ideal, so they can be appropriately appraised. However, following the recent review of the policy on school counsellor role, the time is ripe for the sample job description to be similarly revised and for NZAC's statement on role to be included in the kit. Although it is important to include both the NZAC Code of Ethics and the Code of Supervision, they need to be incorporated into the job description, since this refers only to the requirement for supervision. There is no direct reference at all to the NZAC Code of Ethics or to that of any equivalent professional association, so it can only be assumed that the counsellor would uphold these. In any revision of the appointments kit NZAC needs to spell out more clearly why these two codes are important and why membership of a professional Association is beneficial. At present it seems somewhat reticent in promoting its value and worth in this manner.

The sample person description in the kit outlines a set of nine attributes that are generally considered desirable for a school counsellor:

The appointee should:

- possess a first degree or equivalent or be able to point to qualifications and/or experience relevant to the position of School Counsellor.
- be a trained teacher and have had some classroom experience preferably in teaching adolescents.
- have undertaken some training in the area of counselling and/or be motivated to undertake further training as appropriate.
- have an understanding of themselves that allows them to maintain a high level of self-esteem, to accept their strengths and weaknesses, their successes and failures. They should be emotionally stable, self-confident, reliable, self-motivated, resilient and trusting of others.
- be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. This must include an acknowledgement of and respect for differences stemming from culture, age, disability and/or sexual orientation. Applicants should demonstrate a willingness to understand the Treaty of Waitangi.

- have proven oral and written skills, an ability to communicate ideas clearly and concisely, and have effective interpersonal communication skills particularly with adolescents. They should also have a sense of humour.
- provide evidence that she/he is accepted and respected by others and is able to work effectively and constructively with them.
- have organisational skills to enable effective and flexible use of time and fulfil the tasks of co-ordinator and facilitator.
- be able to play an active part in staff/school affairs and contribute to management decision making.

(*School Counsellor Appointment Kit*, NZAC, 1995, 2nd edition: 6).

In that the person NZAC endorses as suitable in this person specification, should be a trained teacher with an academic degree or equivalent, continues the pre-requisite that has existed for school counsellors right from the early days. The list does however differ somewhat from the fifteen criteria provided in 1964 for APA and for the first national training course (Chapter Three). Again, although it does refer to being "trusting of others", but not of being trustworthy, and of showing "an acknowledgement of a respect for differences", this NZAC list does not talk about the counsellor maintaining ethical behaviour, nor specify what such behaviour might be, nor does it speak of professional standards or joining a professional Association.

The increasing emphasis on accountability through establishing professional standards that monitor effectiveness reflects a change in the traditional notion of trust for professionals. They are no longer to be trusted to do their work properly simply because they are professionals, as a trust based on professional mystique and power. Trust still exists, but now involves more transparency and openness on the part of the professional, who can hide no longer behind their power-knowledge. The professional relationship nowadays involves a client who may be empowered to not only question the professional about their qualifications and procedures, but also has access to a complaints procedure. Although allowance must be made for the occasional genuine mistake as distinct from negligence or incompetence, regardless, mistakes can have a devastating effect on the client. Unless a professional can prove that they did everything in their capacity to ascertain the true nature of a situation, their ignorance and mistakes can result in criminal negligence in the worst-case scenario. It is for this very eventuality that a whole industry has emerged around liability insurance. Establishing boundaries of accountability is required and must be based on reasonable and realistic expectations or else it sets up a low trust environment, which can be counter-productive and de-professionalising.

Calling on the Foucauldian notions of power and governmentality, this chapter has explored the contribution of a professional organisation in developing a professional identity for school counselling. Despite the recent flurry of concern with professional standards within education, school counselling has been concerned with professional standards and ethical behaviour from the very inception of the professional body for guidance counsellors. This is evidenced by NZCGA, an organisation set up primarily by and for school counsellors with the initial aim of promoting effective guidance and counselling services within the New Zealand community (Hermansson, 1999; Miller, 1996). This organisation was clearly a statement about professional recognition and accountability, which was backed up by the drafting and refining of criteria for membership, objectives, aims, a constitution and a Code of Ethics in its first two years (Hermansson, 1999; Miller, 1996). In 1990 this organisation changed not only its name to NZAC but also its focus. It ceased to be primarily for school counsellors, becoming instead a broader organisation available to all counsellors who fulfilled its membership criteria. From 1997, far more stringent membership criteria applied partly in response to third-party funding requirements (such as ACC, and the Family Court) and an increased emphasis on professionalisation resulting from the newer forms of accountability and surveillance that had emerged in the neoliberal environment. Accountability is extremely important given the private nature of the relationship between the counsellor and the client. NZAC's contribution to developing the professional identity of school counselling has provided a comprehensive model of professional accountability that all schools would be well advised to include in their accountability requirements for school counsellors, regardless of whether or not the counsellor belongs to NZAC.

This chapter has described how changes within NZAC reflect an underlying assumption that professionalisation will benefit clients through improved services. The assumption is that this will be achieved once better counsellors are created through being specifically trained and supervised and practising to a competent, ethical standard, consistent with a Code of Ethics. Whether or not this occurs is open to question because "in practice it appears to be placing services for clients further from the focus of counselling" (Miller, 1994: 12). Furthermore, professionalisation tends to involve continual competition between and within occupational groups (Abbott, 1988). Such competition is influenced by the requirements from third-party funders (ACC, DSW, Courts) and the major role they play in defining counselling and professionalisation, which in turn protects counsellors' interests (Miller, 1994). The benefits and pitfalls of increased credentialising need to be assessed (see Hoyt, 1991). Nevertheless, professionalisation has continued apace, with limited counter-argument put forward (Winslade, 1997; Manthei, 1997a, 1997b; Sweet, 1997). There has been a relatively silent assent that the process of professionalisation is largely acceptable to members as a means of actually protecting client interests. Regardless, codes and standards of professional practice *do* form a framework within which safe, competent counselling is enabled. These frameworks represent the ethical self-constitution of the profession. The next chapter looks at just how NZAC has developed its Code of Ethics and how this has become an increasingly important part of the identity of a professional counsellor.

¹ Ted Wadsworth was a member of the 1971 Education Department Working Party, *Guidance in Secondary Schools*; served on the Johnson Committee (1979); chaired the PPTA Guidance Counsellors Advisory Committee; published articles in *PPTA Journal*, *NZ Social Worker* and elsewhere; and started the Newsletter which was the forerunner to *NZCGA and NZAC Newsletters*; was a school counsellor and university lecturer in counselling at Massey and then inaugurated the Waikato course.

² This version of the kit was sent to my school on 18 October 1999, for the Board to use in appointing a relieving counsellor whilst I took up a Teachers Study Award. NZAC had talked about updating the kit for the previous two years, but until 2000, this had not happened, so this section refers entirely to the 1995 kit.

³ At the time the author was NZAC Auckland Branch secretary and assisted in running such workshops and meetings.